

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3233

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

CINCUSNAVEUR

FOSIF ROTA

SIXTHFLT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 3170

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, AG, SP, SS

SUBJECT: SPANISH SAHARA: ALGERIAN REACTION TO LATE DEVELOPMENTS
AND IMPLICATIONS FOR US

1. ALGERIAN PRESS OCT 25 FOCUSES ON SAHARA PROBLEM
AND GIVES PROMINENT COVERAGE TO VARIOUS REPORTS OF
SPANISH-MOROCCAN RAPPROCHMENT ON ISSUE. PRESS HAS
ALSO BEGUN TO REPLY WITH
GROWING HEAT TO ANTI-ALGERIAN CAMPAIGN BEING CONDUCTED
BY NON-GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPERS IN MOROCCO. PIECE IN
ISTIQLAL'S L'OPINION CALLING ALGERIA A NON-NATION
DRAWS SPECIAL FIRE. NEGATIVE WORLD PRESS COMMENTARY
ON GREEN MARCH ALSO CITED.

2. OFFICIAL COMMENTARY ON REPORTED RAPPROCHMENT
LIMITED TO BRIEF ALGERIE PRESSE SERVICE COMMENTARY
ENTITLED "DIPLOMATIC ACTION AND DISCONCERTING
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INITIATIVES." PIECE FOCUSES ON EXUBERANCE OF

MOROCCAN PRESS AND WONDERS HOW SC DECISION TO CONSULT WITH CONCERNED AND INTERESTED PARTIES CAN BE SEEN AS "JUSTIFYING EXPANSIONIST POLICY AND RIGHTS ORIGINALLY NON-EXISTENT AND RECENTLY BROUGHT UNDER FIRE" BY UN COMMISSION AND ICJ. COMMENTARY NOTES THAT IT WAS MOROCCO WHICH MOBILIZED UN BODIES AS WELL AS OAU, ARAB LEAGUE AND NON-ALIGNED AND ISLAMIC COUNTRIES AND CITES DANGER INHERENT IN FAILURE TO RESPECT VIEWS OF THESE GROUPS.

3. BEYOND USUAL REFERENCES TO IMPERIALIST CONSPIRACIES, ALGERIAN MEDIA HAVE NOT REPEATED INTERNATIONAL PRESS HINTS THAT US PLAYING SOME SORT OF MEDIATING ROLE.

4. THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG DIPLOMATS AND JOURNALISTS HERE THAT ALGERIANS VERY UPSET AND THAT, WHILE GOA WILL PROBABLY NOT RESORT TO USING CONVENTIONAL MILITARY FORCE AGAINST MOROCCO, IT WILL LIKELY BEEF UP POLISARIO FOR LONG AND NASTY GUERRILLA CAMPAIGN. ALGERIANS WILL PROBABLY ALSO TRY TO UNLEASH MOROCCAN OPPOSITION ELEMENTS AGAINST GOM ALTHOUGH WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT MOROCCANS HERE GENERALLY SUPPORT KING HASSAN ON SAHARA.

5. COMMENT: TO SUM UP, UNHAPPY GOA HAS NOT LET PUBLIC KNOW THAT SPANISH-MOROCCAN DEAL MAY BE IN MAKING, AND WE CAN EXPECT FURTHER FIREWORKS. GIVEN ARAB CAPACITY FOR ADJUSTING TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES IF PRICE IS RIGHT, IT MAY BE THAT PROPOSED ANSCHLUSS WILL EVENTUALLY RESULT IN PEACEFUL SOLUTION WHICH ALGERIANS WILL ACCEPT, PARTICULARLY IF MOROCCAN RATIFICATION OF ALGERIAN-MOROCCAN BORDER AGREEMENT IS FORTHCOMING. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER, THAT MAGHREB IN FOR DIFFICULT PERIOD.

6. WITH RESPECT TO OUR INTERESTS IN REGION, THIS APPEARS TO BE NO-WIN SITUATION FOR US. NO MATTER HOW THINGS TURN OUT, SOMEONE IS GOING TO BE SORE AT USG. THUS, THERE LIKELY TO BE SOME GOA REACTION AGAINST US IF MOROCCAN-SPANISH DEAL MATERIALIZES. ANYTHING WE

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CAN DO TO UNLOAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUCH A DEVELOPMENT ON SPAIN, UN OR ALLAH WILL BE ALL TO THE GOOD FOR OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS COUNTRY.PARKER

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